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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4231  
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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 4980  
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 7311  
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 2516  
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 5503  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 8783  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0204  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2911  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 6235  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5926  
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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - IRAN

**¶1.** LEAD STORIES: Lead items on Wednesday morning included Prime Minister Aso's plan to shuffle his cabinet and the LDP leadership as early as tomorrow.

**¶2.** "Strong-Armed Posture to Constrain Ties with U.S." A Tehran-based reporter for the moderate Yomiuri wrote (7/1): "There is no doubt that the widening division between reformists and conservatives over alleged election fraud, as well as heightened criticism from the U.S. and Europe over the crackdown on demonstrators, will constrain President Ahmadinejad in his second term as he confronts numerous issues at home and abroad.... It is likely that the Iranian leadership headed by Ayatollah Khamenei and President Ahmadinejad will take a strong-armed posture by further relying on security forces, such as the Revolutionary Guards. However, the siege mentality of the Iranian people will mount further if state control is strengthened in the areas of speech and public morals."

**¶3.** "Credibility of Top Leader Damaged" The business-oriented Nikkei reported from Tehran (7/1): "High-handed containment of reformists by the Iranian leadership has generated distrust and schisms among the Iranian people. The credibility of the nation's top leader has also been harmed, possibly undermining the foundation of the Islamic theocracy."

**¶4.** "Soft Approach to Be Taken at Home?" The liberal Asahi speculated (7/1): "It has been pointed out that Iran is likely to take a moderate line domestically. The discontent of the youth with stringent measures taken by the first Ahmadinejad administration, such as restrictions on clothing and freedom of speech, has become apparent from the recent political confusion.... In view of its unsteady foothold, the administration will probably adopt populist policies in order to prevent dissatisfaction from exploding."

ZUMWALT